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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/700,414	11/04/2003	Richard Fastow	03-03	5776

22443 7590 08/12/2005

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EXAMINER

LE, THONG QUOC

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

2827

DATE MAILED: 08/12/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/700,414	FASTOW ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Thong Q. Le	2827	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-18 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-18 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on ____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. ____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date ____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: ____ |

DETAILED ACTION

1. Amendment filed on 06/24/2005 has been entered.
2. Claims 1-5, 35-57 are presented for examination.

Response to Arguments

3. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1-18 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

4. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent, or on an international application by another who has fulfilled the requirements of paragraphs (1), (2), and (4) of section 371(c) of this title before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent.

The changes made to 35 U.S.C. 102(e) by the American Inventors Protection Act of 1999 (AIPA) and the Intellectual Property and High Technology Technical Amendments Act of 2002 do not apply when the reference is a U.S. patent resulting directly or indirectly from an international application filed before November 29, 2000. Therefore, the prior art date of the reference is determined under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) prior to the amendment by the AIPA (pre-AIPA 35 U.S.C. 102(e)).

5. Claims 1-18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Chen et al. (Pub. U.S. Patent No. 2005/002,4943)

Regarding claims 1-18, Chen et al. disclose a system for programming a group of at least one flash memory cell of an array (Figure 8), comprising:

means for performing a first pass of program verify and programming steps until each flash memory cell of the group attains a threshold voltage that is at least X% of a program verify level but less than the program verify level after the first pass is completed; and means for performing after the first pass is completed, a second pass of program verify and programming steps until each flash memory cell of the group attains substantially the program verify level (Figures 8-9, [0055-0056]).

More specifically, Chen et al. disclose a means for determining whether a flash memory cell of the group has not attained substantially X% of the program verify level, during the program verify step; and means for generating a programming pulse for the flash memory cell of the group that has not attained substantially X% of the program verify level, during the programming step (Figure 9, [0008]), and means for determining whether a flash memory cell of the group has not attained substantially of the program verify level, during the program verify step; and means for generating a programming pulse for the flash memory cell of the group that has not attained substantially X% of the program verify level, during the programming step (Figure 9, [0008]), and wherein the group includes a plurality of flash memory cells to be programmed to multi-level threshold voltages (ABSTRACT, Column 3, lines 1-5), the system further comprising: means for performing the first pass of program verify and programming steps until each flash memory cell of a first sub-group of the group attains a threshold voltage that is at least Y% of a first program verify level but less than the first program verify level, and until each flash memory cell of a second sub-group of the group attains a threshold voltage that is at least Z% of a second program verify level but less than the second

program verify level; and means for performing the second pass of program verify and programming steps until each flash memory cell of the first sub-group attains substantially the first program verify level, and until each flash memory cell of the second sub-group attains substantially the second program verify level ([0040, 0055-0056], and wherein the at least one flash memory cell of the group is contained within a page of the array [0016], and a page buffer for storing a respective address of each flash memory cell of group (Figure 5, 321).

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Thong Q. Le whose telephone number is 571-272-1783. The examiner can normally be reached on 8:00am-5:00pm M-F.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Hoai V. Ho can be reached on 571-272-1777. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



Thong Q. Le
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 2827

THONG LEI
PRIMARY EXAMINER